



The ISC Newsletter

International Society of Cryptozoology

Vol. 11, No. 4
for 1992

Editor

J. Richard Greenwell

The *ISC Newsletter* is an official publication of the International Society of Cryptozoology (ISC), and is published quarterly for ISC members and institutional subscribers. Membership/subscription inquiries and correspondence should be addressed to the ISC Secretariat, P.O. Box 43070, Tucson, Arizona (AZ) 85733, U.S.A. Tel/Fax: 520/884-8369.

©1996 International Society of Cryptozoology

OFFICERS

Bernard Heuvelmans, President

Center for Cryptozoology
9 Allée des Acacias

Le Vesinet 78110, France

Roy P. Mackal, Vice President

9027 S. Oakley Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60620, U.S.A.

J. Richard Greenwell, Secretary

ISC Secretariat

P.O. Box 43070

Tucson, Arizona 85733, U.S.A.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Aaron M. Bauer

Department of Biology

Villanova University

Villanova, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

C. K. Brain

Department of Invertebrates

Transvaal Museum

Pretoria, South Africa

Eric Buffetaut

Laboratory of Vertebrate and Human Paleontology

University of Paris VI

Paris, France

Angelo P. Capparella

Department of Biological Sciences

Illinois State University

Normal, Illinois, U.S.A.

Eugenie Clark

Department of Zoology

University of Maryland

College Park, Maryland, U.S.A.

Colin P. Groves

Department of Archaeology and Anthropology

The Australian National University

Canberra, ACT, Australia

David Heppell

Department of Natural History

Royal Museum of Scotland

National Museums of Scotland

Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K.

Christine Janis

Section of Population Biology, Morphology, and Genetics

Division of Biology and Medicine

Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A.

Grover S. Krantz

Department of Anthropology

Washington State University

Pullman, Washington, U.S.A.

Anthony P. Russell

Department of Biological Sciences

The University of Calgary

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Nikolai Spassov

Department of Mammals

National Museum of Natural History

Bulgarian Academy of Science

Sofia, Bulgaria

Zhou Guoxing

Department of Anthropology

Beijing Natural History Museum

Beijing, China

BOARD LEGAL ADVISOR

Peter A. Jaszi

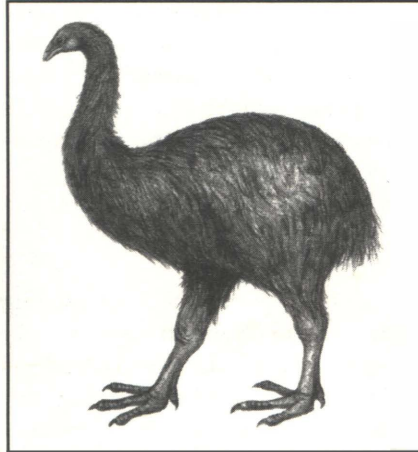
Washington College of Law

The American University

Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

ISSN: 0741-5362

NEW ZEALAND MOA SIGHTING REPORTED BY THREE WITNESSES



Artist's rendition of a large moa, a New Zealand ratite bird. According to conventional scientific opinion, all 13 moa species became extinct before the arrival of Captain Cook in 1769. Occasional 19th and 20th century sighting reports have fueled speculation that some moas may have survived, and a new 1993 report by three witnesses indicates the possible survival of a large 6-foot (2m) species.

In the most dramatic moa sighting report of this century, three witnesses who were "tramping" (hiking) on South Island, New Zealand, claim they encountered a 6-foot (2m) moa which one of them chased and even photographed. The witnesses, Paddy Freaney, a hotel owner, Sam Waby, a schoolteacher, and Rochelle Rafferty, a gardener, all swear that what they saw was, in fact, a moa.

Moas were large, flightless birds of the Order Dinornithiformes, now thought extinct for centuries. Within a group known as ratites, they had affinities with ostriches, rheas, cassowaries, emus, and kiwis. About a dozen moa species are thought to have existed, some standing only three feet (1m) tall, but the largest, *Dinornis giganteus*, standing 10-12 feet (3-3.6m) tall; it was probably the tallest and bulkiest bird that ever lived.

These avian giants became flightless because of New Zealand's lack of mammalian predators, a result of its zoogeographical isolation beginning about 80 million years ago. Then, about 1,000 years ago, humans arrived for the first time. The ancestors of today's Maoris found moas easy to kill, and most paleoecologists and archaeologists be-

lieve all moa species became extinct before Captain Cook arrived in 1769. Yet rumors and reports of living moas persisted throughout New Zealand's British colonization in the 19th century, and although numerous expeditions attempted to find living specimens, all that was found were pre-European remains. (For a more detailed summary of this history, see review of *Prodigious Birds: Moas and Moa Hunting in Prehistoric New Zealand*, in Vol. 10, pp. 83-93, of *Cryptozoology*.)

While some New Zealand scientists will concede that a few small moa populations may have persisted into the 19th century, the idea of 20th century survivals is rejected almost out of hand, and the notion of current survivals, especially of such a large species as described in the new report, is considered ludicrous. Thus, the occasional moa reports that have been made in this century have essentially been ignored by local scientists. It is within this historical context that the new report surfaced and was carried in all New Zealand newspapers. (The report was almost completely ignored by the U.S. press.)

The reported sighting occurred on January 20, 1993, while the witnesses were hiking in the Craigieburn Range, west of Christchurch, and were following the Harper River. All three were reportedly ex-

perienced hikers, and were also well acquainted with New Zealand wildlife. They described the bird's legs and body as standing about three feet (1m) tall, and its long neck reaching almost another three feet (1m). The head and beak were described as small. The feathers were described as reddish-brown and gray. The legs and feet were described as large and thick, with feathers descending almost to the knee joints.

In an interview five days after the alleged sighting with the Christchurch newspaper *The Press*, Freaney stated: "It was a pleasant day out, and we'd been on the go for about four hours when we reached a river bed shortly after 11 a.m. Sam stopped to have a drink. I was in front when I saw, about 40 meters (130 feet) away, this big bird standing by a bush. I thought to myself, 'I don't believe this,' and I whispered to the others to look ahead." Waby stated: "As soon as I saw it, I believed it was a moa — amazing as that sounds. It was one of those things you don't believe is happening, yet it is happening." Rafferty added: "I know it sounds stupid, but we definitely saw it. I couldn't believe it, but it definitely looked like a moa."

Upon being disturbed by the witnesses, the bird reportedly ran across the stream bed. Freaney said that he pursued it in an attempt to photograph it, and that, although it rapidly outdistanced him, he was able to take one photo at a distance of about 115-130 feet (35-40m). They estimated the sighting lasted about 30 seconds. A minute later, after the bird had disappeared in the forest, he photographed what he thought was the bird's wet track outline on a rock, and similar-looking wet tracks on shingle by the stream.

All three witnesses stated that they immediately — and independently — interpreted what they had seen to be a large moa. They dismissed the possibility that they had seen an Australian emu or an African ostrich. "Absolute nonsense," Freaney told Wellington's *The Dominion* newspaper. "I've seen emus bounding about the outback in Australia, so I know what they look like. And if anyone's going to say it was an ostrich, there were

ostriches on the farm when I grew up in Ireland, so I know what they look like too."

Although African ostriches were introduced into the Australian bush earlier in this century, and several feral populations now exist, it has never been introduced into New Zealand. The emu, an Australian ratite bird with a much shorter neck, was imported into New Zealand three times in the 19th century, and several times in this century for breeding purposes, but no introductions into the wild are recorded, and no emus are known — or thought — to have lived wild in New Zealand at any time.

According to their account, the three witnesses, still stunned after returning from the trek, decided not to reveal their sighting — not even to friends or relatives — for several days in order to have time to develop the 35mm film roll, and to make an official report to the Christchurch office of New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DOC). At first, this agency seemed impressed by the three seemingly credible witnesses, and started making tentative plans to undertake fieldwork in the area of the sighting to try to find further evidence. (Any living moas would immediately fall under official DOC protection, as the wording of New Zealand's Wildlife Act, although written under the assumption that moas are extinct, automatically protects all species unless they are specifically excluded in the Act.)

After the report was made public, Ken Hughey, a DOC Protection Officer, stated that professional bird surveyors were to be dispatched within days to the area to see what evidence they could uncover. In particular, feathers, tracks, and droppings would be sought. He discounted the possibility of the bird having been an ostrich. "The bird in the photograph," he stated, is either...an emu or a moa." He also stated that the finding of a live moa would represent the most important natural history discovery in New Zealand in two centuries.

At the same time, the Department was concerned that the whole thing, including the photograph, may have been an

elaborate hoax. Several New Zealand scientists, including paleontologist Beverly McCulloch, were informing the press that living moas were essentially impossible. In addition, Dennis Dunbar, a railway station owner at the west coast village of Manoa, also told the press that Freaney, as an Irishman, was a practical joker with whom he enjoyed matching wits. He stated that, some months before, Freaney had indicated to him that he would soon outdo him by coming up with a new and better story — presumably the moa claim.

In response, Freaney, in a television interview, emphatically denied having made such a statement, or that his sighting report was part of a hoax or practical joke. The following day he stated to *The Press*: "I am very angry about this. I did not say that to him. This is a genuine claim, and he is way out of line suggesting it's a joke thing between us. He is trivializing a serious report. He is seeking publicity for his railway station. I am not seeking publicity."

Freaney was also defended by Brent Beadle, the owner of the Manoa Hotel, who stated that Freaney "is a man of some standing in this area. He is respected, and he knows it would be stupid to wreck all of that with a hoax. Mr. Dunbar has been trying to cash in on the media attention."

Although Freaney's alleged statement was later withdrawn by Dunbar, the damage had been done, and the idea of hoaxing was now definitely in the air, and was being played up by the media. Despite this, Dr. Hughey, the DOC Protection Officer, stated that, although a hoax possibility had "obviously" been considered, "...these are credible people who say they saw a large flightless bird which they believe to be a moa. It may or may not be a moa; we have to check that out. But in the meantime we have to take what they say at face value. We have no evidence that this is a hoax. These people have staked their reputations on it."

Indeed, Freaney, formerly an instructor with the British Army's elite Special Air Service (SAS) commando unit, con-

tinued to be emphatic about what he saw. "One of the things you learn in the SAS," he said, "is to be able to sum up a situation fairly quickly, and so, for me, those 30 seconds seemed like ages. I had plenty of time to be sure about what I saw." He also stated, in another television interview, that he would be willing to sign an affidavit swearing on the truthfulness of the claim. (While such affidavits carry little weight in the U.S., they are considered highly credible in British Commonwealth countries).

Some observers voiced suspicions of the fact that Freaney owns a nearby hotel — which could benefit him personally if his moa claim were to increase local tourism — as well as the fact that co-witness Rafferty is a gardener at the hotel. On the other hand, Waby, a school-teacher at the Aranui High School, seems like an unlikely candidate for a hoaxter. "We are not seeking publicity and, frankly, we are wary of the ridicule that a sighting like this is sure to attract," he told *The Press*.

DOC's Dr. Hughey perhaps added the most sensible comment to the claims and counter-claims being thrown around in the New Zealand press: "If we were to ignore this and it turned out to be correct and we did not look, it would look pretty silly."

But that, in the end, is exactly the risk DOC decided to take. By January 26, plans were ready to conduct several days of fieldwork in the sighting area — Freaney had revealed the exact location to DOC, but this information was being kept from the public. The fieldwork was to be led by DOC's Protected Species Officer Andy Grant, and Freaney had volunteered to accompany the team. In a new interview he stated: "I haven't changed my mind. I know what we saw last week, but we didn't say anything until our photographs were developed." He also discounted new speculation that they had observed an ostrich, an emu, or even a llama or a red deer. "An emu's not all that big," he stated. "This thing's bloody huge."

Dr. Hughey had earlier speculated that what had been seen had perhaps been a

released or escaped emu from Canterbury's Issac Wildlife Trust, an emu breeding facility. However, Lady Issac informed the press that all their emus were kept behind a 6-foot (2-m) wire fence, and that, in any case, none were missing. Lady Issac also stated that the facility's first chicks had been sold in the previous months, and all except four had gone to North Island, New Zealand. The four that had remained on South Island had only been six weeks old when sold in October-November, 1992, and, even if any of them had subsequently escaped or been released, they could not possibly have grown to the height reported by the witnesses. "Also," added Lady Issac acidly, "an emu is nothing like a moa."

Several wildlife parks in the Canterbury area also have some emus, but none were reported missing. Furthermore, an escaped emu could not have reached the Craigieburn Range on its own.

Also entering the fray, but with a more moderate tone, was Denis Dutton, of the New Zealand Skeptics. Dr. Dutton emphasized to the press that it would be wise not to automatically dismiss reports of presumably extinct species, or species reported where they were not known to exist.

This was not, however, the opinion of moa expert Beverly McCulloch, head of the Prehistory Section and curator of sub-fossil birds at the Canterbury Museum. Calling the photograph "inconclusive evidence," she pointed out that the reported sighting was not within the known historical range of moas, and was at an elevation far higher than what was preferred by such birds. While she admitted that the reported description seemed to match that of the second largest moa species, *Dinornis nova-ezealandiae*, she thought that the odds against a living moa being involved were "monumental."

Although she herself had not spoken to the witnesses, she told *The Evening Post* that "the weight of scientific evidence is against it. The history of moa studies is littered with possible sightings, none of which has ever been proven, some of which were hoaxes, and most of

which were wishful thinking." She also stated that "...you are looking at a bird that all scientific evidence points to being extinct for almost 500 years."

Similar doubts were expressed by Mike Dickison at the New Zealand Museum in Wellington. In an interview with the *Evening Post*, he stated that any living moas "would leave droppings and footprints, create trails, browse vegetation, and probably make noisy calls in the mating season," all of which would presumably have resulted in scientific detection. He called the possibility of a surviving moa species "remote."

As the public and media attention increased — this included radio "name the moa" contests, moa treks, moa pies, and the illegal erection of a moa crossing road sign — DOC's enthusiasm waned. In the end, the atmosphere generated by the negative comments from scientists, coupled with media insinuations of possible hoaxing, all proved too much, and DOC canceled the planned fieldwork. DOC spokesman Jim Kidson told the press that the Department wanted to "check it out [the reported sighting] a little more...its a fanciful claim, and we want to make sure before sending anyone in there that we've checked every angle." Dr. Hughey himself, now more pessimistic, told *The Press* that "it's a billion to one chance of moas still existing. If it was true, it would be an amazing feat of survival. But if it is just a hoax, then it's a pity it's being investigated at taxpayer's expense."

The DOC decision to suspend the field investigation was supported by New Zealand's Conservation Minister Denis Marshall, who stated to the press: "We do not have unlimited resources."

Freaney expressed surprise at the turn of events, stating that DOC had "known about this sighting since last Friday [two days after the alleged encounter]. They had plenty of time to go in there before the thing became public knowledge." He also stated that it was "a shame" that DOC had not gone to the site right away, before any evidence became lost due to subsequent rains, and he stated that he himself would do so if DOC did not. As

for DOC expenses, he added: "What taxpayers' money? They were only talking about sending in a couple of guys who are already on salary. The big expense to taxpayers is having a couple of guys go for a walk instead of playing in front of a computer. I'm not exactly impressed with the Conservation Department."

With Freaney at the center of the publicity, including the insinuations of hoaxing, Sam Waby, one of the other two witnesses, went public with his own position. He had not been able to make many public statements earlier because he had been traveling, but on January 26 he told the New Zealand Press Association that "everything so far that's been published in the [Christchurch] paper is correct...everything Paddy has said is accurate...I have been away from town this week and missed the first blast of the ridicule and skepticism. All I can say is that I know what we saw and I stand by that...the only conclusion I can believe, in somewhat disbelief, was that it was a moa...I am prepared to back up everything Paddy and Rochelle have said. We are not staging a hoax or a stunt...We are not seeking publicity. We just want someone to investigate our sighting."

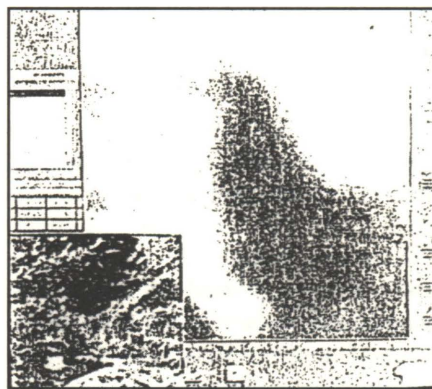
According to reporter Dave Wilson writing in *The Press* on January 28, Waby, head of the art department at Aranui High School, was very concerned about his reputation, and was not happy with the DOC statements inferring possible hoaxing. Furthermore, he had had a heart attack a few months before — the trek having been a recuperative exercise for him — and he was under doctor's orders to avoid emotional stress — hardly the credentials of a hoaxer. As for Rafferty, Wilson reported that she had qualifications in park management, had been a DOC volunteer worker in the past, and was hoping to gain permanent DOC employment in the future. Her involvement in a suspected hoax would hardly have gone in her favor.

The usually good-humored Freaney, meanwhile, continued daily to field allegations of hoaxing. With TV cameramen gathered around his hotel asking for a confession, he continued to insist that their sighting was genuine, and he ad-

mitted that he was "getting snappy" because of the negative publicity. At one point, he delivered an impromptu lecture to the gathered journalists, telling them that "all this levity is one thing, but please consider the serious side of what we are saying...It is not a joke. We are serious, and I'm getting sick of people who just say we made it all up."

He also blamed the media-created circus-like atmosphere for Waby's new angina pains, for which he had been placed back on medication. Even so, he stated, all three of them still agreed that going public had been the right thing to do. "It's too important to ignore or just pretend it never happened," he stated.

While all these events were transpiring, another event had quietly been taking place in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of Canterbury, in Christchurch: the analysis by an imaging team of Freaney's photo of the supposed moa, which Freaney himself had submitted for evaluation.



Electronically-enhanced image of a supposed moa, from a photograph taken by Paddy Freaney when he and two other witnesses reportedly encountered a 6-foot moa in the Craigieburn Range of South Island, New Zealand. The image processing was conducted by a team in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering of the University of Canterbury, in Christchurch. Note thick "neck" and sharp beak-like ending on "head." The "neck" may appear thicker than normal due to profusion of feathers.

The analysis results were made public on January 28, when the imaging team reported that, after electronic enhancement by computer, the blurred shape of the supposed moa appeared, in fact, to be that of a bird. After two days of image processing, Kevin Taylor, a graduate student in the department and a member of the imaging team, stated that the image was three-dimensional, and that the possibility of a cardboard cutout or a model of a moa being involved had already been discarded. The distance of the object from the camera lens was calculated to be about 115 feet (35m), as claimed, and its height was thought to be "quite big."

The analysis demonstrated, Taylor stated, that the object in question could not have been a red deer or a South American llama. "It appears to be a large bird," he stated, adding that "in all pictures I have deblurred, I end up with this funny bit — I have to be careful what I say — but you could perhaps say it was a beak, I suppose."

Freaney welcomed the announcement. "I'm bloody relieved," he stated. "We were not staging a hoax or a stunt, but a lot of people seem to think otherwise. This shows we were genuine in our sighting."

This optimistic assessment was not shared by New Zealand scientists, however. Richard Holdaway, a paleoecologist who attended the Department of Electrical Engineering's January 28 briefing on the photo analysis, stated that the object photographed was merely a red deer, a common New Zealand mammal introduced from Britain in the 19th century.

Believing that the neck was "too thick to be a bird," he stated that "it looks to me like a three-quarters view of a four legged animal. The shape is as consistent with a four-legged animal as a two-legged bird...If it was two meters [6ft] to the top of the body, you're talking about the biggest, rarest moa of them all [actually, the second biggest — ed.]. When you look at it at a distance like that, to me it looks like a poor image of the back end of a red deer."

Taylor stated that he would like to examine the original negative of the photo, and Freaney responded that he would be "delighted" to provide it. However, he was less enthusiastic about a similar request from DOC: "I said 'Sod off. You must think I came down in the last shower.'"

Four days later, on February 1, DOC announced that it had, in fact, ended all further investigation into the Freaney case. It also confirmed a press report that, in 1991, it had prepared a moa management plan, but that this had been done purely as a theoretical exercise, an example for a DOC manual on how to set management policy. "It's an imaginary case," Dr. Hughey told the press, "...purely hypothetical." The plan calls for enhancing, restoring, and protecting moa habitat; monitoring moa populations; conducting biological, physiological, and ecological research on moas; and controlling visitors to moa habitats.

Two days later, an editorial in *The Dominion* suggested that DOC's performance in the whole affair "borders on dereliction of duty." It continued: "It was tardy in following up the sighting, keener to find inconsistencies in the trio's sto-

ries than credit the common core, intent on proving it was all a hoax. Moas will never be rediscovered when that is the official mindset...the department, in the best bureaucratic tradition, already has a management plan. All it lacks is moas. Yet when somebody finds one for it, it does not want to know."

The next day, it was confirmed that Freaney had handed over the original negatives of the photos to the University. He stated that he had refused to loan them to DOC, believing that that agency had an agenda and would not pursue its investigation fairly. When the cost of the University's further image processing work on the negatives was brought up, Freaney, "in the interests of getting to the bottom of this mystery," agreed to pay for all such expenses.

On February 11, the Department of Electrical Engineering announced that no firm conclusions had resulted from analysis of the original negatives. "It is the same result as before," said Kevin Taylor, stating that he could not take the computer work any further. He was also reluctant to comment on the animal depicted in the photo. "I have no opinion on what it is," he stated. "I was just trying to de-blur

the image." He added, however, that his original impression that it was a large bird had not changed.

"It's a shame," Freaney told the press, "especially after they talked about being able to do so much if they had the negatives."

And there the matter rests. A truly extraordinary claim. Three witnesses. A photo. A computer analysis. A media circus. Skeptical scientists. And a reluctant official agency. All the ingredients for the perfect cryptozoological story — including the inconclusive ending.

Do some moas still survive on New Zealand's rugged South Island? Scientific opinion weighs against it. This and previous eyewitness testimony weighs in favor of it. In this case, at least, misidentification seems out of the question. Thus, when all the "if's" and "but's" are done with, the entire affair can be reduced to one simple proposition: either these three witnesses are being truthful — meaning that there are moas alive today in New Zealand — or they are lying. And only they can know the truth of this for sure.

QUOTES

"Here I say to parents, 'Don't give your son money. As far as you can afford it, give him horses.' No one ever came to grief — except honorable grief — through riding horses. Young men have often been ruined through backing horses, but never through riding them; unless of course, they break their necks, which, taken at a gallop, is a very good death to die."

Winston S. Churchill
British statesman and wartime prime minister.

"It is sometimes thought that any objectivity there is in science is due to scientists being objective people. Some claim that this means being dispassionate regarding the truth or falsity of one's hypothesis. Others have even held that

scientists should actively try to refute their own hypotheses! But this is a mistake. The objectivity of science, imperfect as it is, is not a function of the objectivity of scientists. It is a function of the 'logical' rules of the game."

Ronald N. Giere
Understanding Scientific Reasoning
Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984

"The more limited the resources of a nation ... the more stringent is the requirement that the research be visibly directed to solve some urgent problem of society. This philosophy is misguided in a fundamental way. The truly major discoveries that have altered the face of medicine — for example, X-rays, penicillin, recombinant DNA — have all come from the pursuit of curiosity about nature without relevance to medicine. The same can be said for the great industrial inventions ...

No matter how counter-intuitive it may seem — to the scientist as well as the laymen — the most sure and cost-effective route to discovery is through creative activity of the scientist or inventor rather than the pursuit of a defined goal."

Arthur Kornberg,
American biochemist
Editorial, *Science*, Vol 257:859, 1992

"The people who bind themselves to systems are those who are unable to encompass the whole truth and try to catch it by the tail; a system is like the tail of truth, but truth is like a lizard; it leaves its tail in your fingers and runs away knowing full well it will grow a new one..."

Ivan Turgenev
19th century Russian writer

EDITORIAL

MOAS, REALITY, AND SOCIAL PERCEPTION

This newsletter features a remarkable sighting report by three witnesses of a six-foot (2m) moa on South Island, New Zealand. These large, flightless ratite birds supposedly became extinct about 500 years ago, long before Captain Cook arrived in New Zealand in 1769, although there were numerous reports of them in the 19th century — none of them verified.

The evidence from the 20th century has been more sporadic and insubstantial. Nevertheless, in a lengthy book review I wrote for *Cryptozoology* (Vol. 10), I ended with what now seems like a prophetic phrase: "...I can't help but feel that this is still unfinished business."

Perhaps the reader can appreciate the strange feeling I had when, just as that particular journal containing that phrase was being mailed by the publisher, I received a fax from my colleagues at *BBC Wildlife* magazine in England with the news that three witnesses in New Zealand claimed to have encountered a 6-foot (2m) moa! Unfinished business indeed.

We live in a world of certainties, certainties we can depend on, and these are shaped by our social perception of reality. Reality, in general — and I don't want to get into quantum mechanics here! — remains constant. What changes continually is our *perception* of reality. The question confronting us now is: could there be surviving moas in the "real" world, unrecognized by zoology and thus by society? Is it merely an incorrect social *perception* that moas are extinct? Or are moas truly extinct, and our perception of reality — despite eyewitness testimony to the contrary — correct?

Barring quantum theory, only one of these two possibilities can be correct — and thus reflect "reality." Of course, the moas themselves, if they exist at all, couldn't care less about these two philosophical questions confronting us; they would just be busy doing whatever it is that moas do, and staying out of our way.

I don't raise these questions merely as an amusing mental exercise. These questions actually address what a large part of cryptozoology is all about. What many of us in cryptozoology are interested in, in a sense, is the possibility that our social perceptions of reality may, in some instances, be incorrect, and that some of the numerous "unknown" animals reported around the world may, in fact, be *part* of our reality.

This inevitably leads to another question. How many times have we heard, "Oh, that's impossible"? Too many times to remember, for sure. In most of our everyday mundane affairs, we don't have much trouble distinguishing the "possible" from the "impossible." We know it's "possible" — though very improbable — to win the lottery. At the same time, we know it's "impossible" to walk unassisted on the ceiling.

I myself tend to be very cautious about "impossible" things. So many "impossible" things in the past have later proven to be true, and we now often smile smugly at the naivete of previous generations. One of my favorite historical examples is that of meteorites — "stones falling from the sky" which, not so very long ago, were thought to be "impossible" despite repeated and consistent eyewitness testimony.

In cryptozoology we also have had — and still have — our "impossible" things. The coelacanth would once have been considered "impossible" as total extinction of this archaic fish form was thought to have occurred between 65 and 80 million years ago. If there were a relict moa population, and as the extinction of moas supposedly occurred only about 500 years ago, one could ask what would be so extraordinary about *that*. New Zealand scientists, however, publicly proclaim the odds of such a survival as "remote," "monumental," and — my favorite — "a billion to one." At least they didn't invoke the word "impossible," although they certainly implied it.

In this respect, I recall a physical anthropologist who was once much amused at the supposed naivete of some cryptozoologists when he was examining track casts of the supposed Sasquatch (Bigfoot) here at the Secretariat. Such a primate, he maintained, was "impossible." Thus, *any* evidence produced for it necessarily *had* to be mistaken or fabricated. I explained to him that, in science, we are supposed to deal with probabilities, not beliefs. We assign probabilities to our hypotheses and to the results of our experiments. Thus, the way he — and others who espouse such "impossibilities" — should really proceed is to assign a very low probability to the Sasquatch — if that is indeed his judgment.

This probability could be as low as one wants, but it should never be absolute zero. In philosophical and statistical terms, one can increase a very low probability **should new information** from the environment necessitate this; one cannot, however, increase absolute zero at all, at least not without cheating. In fact, the difference between a very low probability — say, a probability of 0.000001 — and absolute zero is enormous, and could mean all the difference in the world. It may even be the largest difference imaginable in the Universe. It is the difference between something and nothing. I suspect, of course, that my properly "skeptical" visitor had had little exposure to the philosophy of science during his academic training.

Well, I don't know if those witnesses really saw a moa. I hope they did. It's certainly possible. And it's certainly not "impossible."

J. Richard Greenwell
Editor

QUOTE

"Use soft words and hard arguments."

English proverb

FORTHCOMING

Articles scheduled to appear in the next eight newsletters (for Vols. 13, 1993-96, and 14, 1997) will cover — not necessarily in this order — the following topics:

- * New reports of possible Pleistocene ground sloths in the Brazilian Amazon.
- * The discovery of large new mammal species in Vietnam.
- * The controversy surrounding the description of *Cryptophidion* (the Vietnamese sharp-nosed snake) in *Cryptozoology*.
- * The discovery of new fossils establishing mammoth survival to as recently as 4,000 years ago.
- * The official confirmation by New Brunswick of puma presence in Eastern North America.

* Discoveries of both New and Old World monkey species.

* The discovery of a new tree kangaroo species in New Guinea.

* The discovery of a new beaked whale species in Peru.

* The controversy surrounding the formal description of the Cadborosaurus "sea serpent" as a plesiosaur.

* The controversy surrounding new analyses of *Octopus giganteus* and Bermuda Blob tissues.

* Analysis results of new California Sasquatch (Bigfoot) video footage.

* A reported close-up sighting of a Sasquatch by a U.S. Forest Service patrolman.

* The controversy surrounding the hoax-

ing claim of the Wilson (Surgeon's) Nessie photo.

* A review of Almasty (wildman) evidence collected by Marie-Jeanne Koffmann in the Caucasus over a 40-year period.

* A review of thylacine (Tasmanian tiger) evidence on mainland Australia.

* And interview with long-time Sasquatch investigator Bob Titmus.

* An interview with long-time Nessie investigator Robert H. Rines.

* An extensive annotated bibliography of all cryptozoology-related books published since 1990.

* And lots, lots more, including the News & Notes and Cryptoletters columns.

RENEWAL INFORMATION

This newsletter is the last publication that members will receive for Vol. 11 — corresponding to the year 1992. (Vol. 11 of the journal was published in April, 1994.)

Members should now renew for Vol. 12, preferably using the enclosed renewal-return envelope. (Most renewal processing errors occur when this renewal envelope is not returned to the Secretariat with the payment. Even members in other countries who pay by bank draft or international postal money order should mail the envelope back to the ISC Secretariat with an indication that payment is being made separately). Dues are still \$32 (£22), which includes the receipt of one journal and four newsletters.

Members are also requested to renew promptly. Not only are the funds badly needed, but prompt renewals avoid the extra cost and time involved in sending later renewal reminders. Members who just recently renewed in advance (using the return envelope in the last newsletter

— Vol. 11, No. 3), need not, of course, do so again.

As explained in the last newsletter, renewals for Vol. 12 will cover the membership period 1993-1996. That is, Vol. 12, instead of covering one year as customary, will cover four years, after which we hope to return to an annual volume with both publications — with Vol. 13 for 1997. This is the most practical solution in order to get caught up with publications. The volume numbering will continue uninterrupted, nobody will miss any issues, and no members will be shortchanged. (Those members who previously paid for one or more years in advance will be credited those extra years in the Society's computerized records. For instance, if a member previously paid for 1993 and 1994, he/she will be bounced up through 1993-96 to 1997.)

What *has* been discontinued permanently is the seasonal identification (Spring, Summer, etc.) on the front of newsletter. This never made much sense

to members in the Southern Hemisphere — where spring runs from September to December — except when newsletters ran six months late and they consequently received them right on time!

The mailing label used for this issue is the "peel-off" kind. Members should peel this off the back page of the newsletter (or off the large envelope in the case of non-U.S. members) and stick it onto the designated area on the renewal-return envelope. Any address errors or changes should be clearly marked. (If the label has become lost, members should add their name and address by hand, and — very important — indicate if it is a new address.)

* Payment Instructions: U.S.A.

Payment (\$32) may be made by personal check or money order, postal or otherwise. Although not recommended, cash is also acceptable.

* Payment Instructions: U.K.

Payment may be made in £ Sterling (£22) by personal cheque with no bank charges or penalties, provided cheques are drawn against British banks. Although not recommended, cash is also acceptable.

* Payment Instructions: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland:

Payment may be made in local currency by personal cheque with no bank charges or penalties, provided the equivalent of US\$32 (using the exchange rate current at the time) is sent, and cheques are drawn against banks in their own countries. Although not recommended, cash in US\$ or £ Sterling is also acceptable.

* Payment Instructions: All Other Countries (or persons in the above countries who do not wish to pay by personal cheque in local currency):

1) A bank draft for US\$32 drawn against a U.S. bank. The member will be charged a bank fee. (Note: bank drafts in US\$ not drawn against U.S. banks cannot be accepted.)

2) An international postal money order for US\$32, transmitted by the postal department in the originating country to the U.S. Postal Service, which then sends a money order to the Society. The member will probably be charged an additional fee by the originating postal department. (Note: local postal money orders not transmitted through the U.S. Postal Service cannot be accepted as they are not valid in the U.S.A.)

3) Cash in the amount of US\$32 or £22. This is not recommended, but is acceptable.

Donations over and above the \$32 (or £22) dues would be very much appreciated, as they help bridge the gap between the Society's income and expenses. Such a donation, however small, will make the renewing member a Sustaining Member for the next membership period, and he

or she will be included in the listing to appear in the last newsletter for Vol. 12. (See the listing of Sustaining Members for Vol. 11 in this issue). All donations are tax deductible for American members with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

In summary, members are requested to:

* Renew promptly to avoid costly reminder notices.

* Follow one of the above payment methods.

* Use the enclosed renewal-return envelope and peel-off label.

* Indicate any name or address errors or changes.

* And, if possible, add a voluntary donation to help the Society meet its expenses.

Special Note: Vol. 12 (1993-1996) of the journal is in production, and will soon be mailed to all those members who will have renewed by then (it will be followed by four Vol. 12 newsletters). This journal will contain a new renewal-return envelope for Vol. 13 (which will correspond to 1997). Although it will arrive soon after this newsletter — which contains the final Vol. 12 renewal envelope — the new renewal-return envelope in the journal will be for a completely new membership period, Vol. 13 (for 1997), and members are requested to renew again at that time. The only reason these different-year renewal envelopes are being sent out so close together is so that we can get caught up with publications.

QUOTE

"If anybody says he can think about quantum problems *without* getting giddy, that only shows he has not understood the first thing about them."

Neils Bohr
Danish physicist

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

The number of ISC Sustaining Members in the last membership period — for Vol. 11 (corresponding to the year 1992) — reached 306, eight more than the 298 for the 1991 membership period, but still 44 short of the announced goal of 350.

This figure represents about 39 percent of the entire membership, and demonstrates that well over a third of ISC members were willing to voluntarily help the Society financially. The total membership was again about 800 (including institutional subscribers); this has not increased for a number of years, but neither has it decreased.

There are four categories of Sustaining Membership. For 1992, these were as follows. Category 1: members who donated between \$1 and \$29 or £1-17 (making a total payment — with membership dues — of \$31 to \$59 or £19-35); Category 2: members who donated \$30 to \$99 or £18-£58 (making a total payment of \$60 to \$129 or £36-76); Category 3: members who donated \$100 or more, but less than \$1,000, or £59 but less than £590 (making a total payment of at least \$130 or £77); and Category 4: members who contributed \$1,000 or £590, or more. Category 4 members automatically become Benefactors — if they are not so already — which includes a Life Membership, with the member continuing to receive all publications but not having to pay anything ever again.

The number of Category 1 Sustaining Members decreased from 228 to 218, but the number of Category 2 Sustaining Members increased from 48 to 66. Category 3 stayed relatively the same, decreasing from 19 to 17, and Category 4 stayed the same at 5 (including the Society's first two Corporate Sponsors).

The list of Sustaining Members for this period appears below. For reporting purposes, joint members are counted as one. The list covers only those members who donated for this particular membership period (Vol. 11 of both the newsletter and

journal, corresponding to the year 1992). Donations for a subsequent period are not included, as they will be listed at a later time.

Category 1

(donations from \$1 to \$29, or £1-£17)

Richard Adair; David Arnsperger; Ronald A. Banister; Matthew A. Bille; Larry Blanco; Peter Blum; Jacques Boisvert; Janet Bord; John R. Borkowski; Peter A. Bostrom; Christian Boudeau; C.K. Brain; Michael Bridge; Kelvin M. Britton; Cesare Brizio; Walter G. Brundage; Slader G. Buck; John S. Buckley; David W. Burchfiel; Bruce & Beverly Burgess; Alejandro Carrillo; Bruce Champagne; Mike Choman; Kenji Chono; Eugene Clark; Phil Cochran; Charles N. Coleman; John L. Conley; Darryl L. Coon; Steve Cooperman; Benoit Crevier; Wilson Crone.

Casey Dallia; Gill Deford; David J. de Lucca; Ian Denholm; Paul G. Denit; Carol Deno; Francis de Sarre; Michael K. Diamond; Franziska Dokter; Terrance Doloughy; John Doune; Alex Downs; Clinton M. Drymon; Sharon Edwards; Hilary Evans; Jack Falloni; Phillip J. Feltz; Michael Ferro; Christian P. Feuillet; Richard Freeman; Chuck Frownfelter; Ferruccio Galiotti; Charles B. Garabedian; Betty Sanders Garner; Randy R. Garlipp; Paul Garner; Warren Garst; Dan Gettinger; Daniel L. Gilbert; Shirley Gipson; Jane Goodall; Michael Goss; Michael Granger; John J. Grigas; Benoit Grison; Claude Guerin.

John Hall; John A. Hall; Mark Hannah; Roger Hansen; Vilmundur Kip Hansen; Don Hardin; Len A. Harjala; Clive A. Harvey; Joseph A. Haydu; Michael Heaney; John H. Heckman; Donald A. Heller; H.O. Hendricks; Thomas Hickerson; Robert Hilton; Richard L. Hobbs; Robert Henselman; Herbert J. Hodges; Arthur L. Howe; Kevin E. Hoxsey; John C. Hughes; Diane M. Irwin; Louis M. Jackman; Alan Jaimovich; Christine Janis; H. Janssens; Christ P. Kanoles; A. Kardinaal; Daryl R. Karns; J. Michael Kelly; H.T. Kenny; Quentin Keynes;

William P. Kilroy; Russ Kine; Peter J. Kirkham; James L. Knestrick; Grove Koger; Frederick Kolbe; Gia Koontz; Jay Koonz; Stephen F. Kredel; S. Kumaranayagam.

Sterling Lanier; Rafael Lara Palmeros; Shane Lea; Philippe LeFebvre; Edward W. Levin; Eric Liljequist; C.E. Loader; Michael Loncar; Albert F. Lopez; Perry Lucas; Frank J. Lynch; Daniel F. Lyons; Roy P. Mackal; Alain Mahuzier; David V. Mandley; John M. Maliwacki; Barbara Malloy; Richard H. Martin; Patricia C. Matteson; Marcus J.G. Matthews; Mosca Maurizio; Lester Mayes; Adrienne Mayor; Paul Mead; Nick Metskas; Ronald W. Miller; Mary-ellen Morbeck; Masaru Mori; Billy Morrison; Robert Moy; Randy Myers; Glen McClelland; Ralph McGeehan; Helen J. McGinnis; Jonathan McGirt; Robert D. McKenzie.

Andrew Oberheim; Thomas A.A. Oleson; Gene Ondeccheck; Vance Orchard; David J. Pace; Gary Paine; Don Pasewark; G.L. Payne; Marc Pechenart; John W. Perry; Ian T. Peters; Philip A. Petruzzi; Lenny Picker; William S. Pietrzak; Gregory S. Polcrynka; Nicholas Pope; John M. Proffett; Michael T. Pugliese; Benjamin Radford; Fred Olen Ray; Michel Reynal; Keith L. Record; Herman Reichenbach; Rosalind Ribnick; David L. Robbins; Al Romero; Ronald Rosenblatt; John H. Roush; Eileen Roy; John Rumierz; Charles & Rosemary Ryan; William W. Ryan.

Mark Sanborne; Gabriel Sanchez; Kenneth A. Sayers; Earl A. Scarr; John B. Scheel; D.L.F. Sealy; Miguel Segui-Urena; J. Douglas Sheeran; Graham O. Sidle; David J. Sorg; Wendy Sproule; John Stains; John Steiner; Hans U. Stettler; Donna Stucky; Curt Sutherly; Joe Swatek; Mark W. Swift; Robert Takaroff; David Taylor; Colin Thomas; Lars Thomas; Jay Tischendorf; Fabrice Tortey; Andreas Trottmann; Stephen Walker; John E. Wall; Keith Keeler Walsh; Phillip Ward; Bill Weiler; Marc Weinberger; M.A. Wheeler; David F. Whitby; David Williams; Jason C. Williams; Francis F. Williams; Thomas R. Williams; Gene Wolfe; Malcolm F. Wollard; Joe Zarzynski & Pat Meaney.

Category 2

(donations from \$30 to \$99, or £18-£58)

Robert Ash; Bruno W. Augenstein; Aaron M. Bauer; Francis W.W. Bernard; James H. Brewer; E.P. Busser; Angelo P. Capparella; Wayne Cermak; Kenneth Chan; Michael Coffey; N. Blair Cooke; Peter C. Crall; Cristiano Daglio; Neil J. Durnan; Glen E. Dust; George W. Earley; Richard Ellis; Jean-Francois Ferrary; J.E. Fishburn; Barbara J. Gardner; J.O. Gelderloos; Michael D. Germroth; Ralph G. Hare; John B. Howarth; Ronald D. Humble; Wally Hund; Jeffrey Hutterer; Brian Irwin; James A. Jeffery; Ian D. Jones; Sean R. Johnston; Jack Joy; Robert Kirch; Edward L. Krause.

Paul A. Larsen; Paul H. LeBlond & Annette Shaw; Choong Kheong Leong; Gary S. Mangiacopra; Martien 'T. Mannetje; Dirk Mattheisen; Robert E. Melton; Athena Mengharini; Garyl D. Miller; Marc E.W. Miller; Bruce H. Offord; Jean Palesi; R. Peter Rae; Richard Ravalli; Bruce & Jannie Rivera; Max Roddick; Ennio Scannapieco; Wolfgang M. Schmidt; David & Edith Smith; Ted Straiton; Tokuharu Takabayashi; Franco Tassi; Daniel L. Thompson; Gavin Troster; Henry Van Epp; Dick Venema; Chris Walas; Gilbert Wald; Corby Waste; Osamu Watanabe; Thomas Wilkinson; Edward B. Winn (Benefactor).

Category 3

(donations of \$100/£59 or more)

Daniel L. Bloch; Paul Dini; Robert C. Dorion (Benefactor); Paul Genteman; F. Gary Gieseke; Dennis Glavin; John Green (Honorary Member); Jerry Hamlin; Geoffrey Hunt; Peter Jaszi; Michael J. Manyak; Michael J. McGovern; Frances M. Poe; Adam J. Rowen; Hugh H. Trotti; Anders Tullberg; Curtis E. Tuthill.

Category 4

(donations of \$1,000/£590 or more)

Rolf Auster (Benefactor), Miami, Florida, U.S.A.; Kurt Von Nieda (Benefactor)/Microsoft Corporation (matching funds), Redmond, Washing-

ton, U.S.A.; Count F.C. Zedlitz (Benefactor), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Academy of Applied Science (Corporate Sponsor), Concord, New Hampshire, U.S.A.; The Conservation Agency (Corporate Sponsor), Jamestown, Rhode Island, U.S.A.

Despite this support, the Society was still several thousands dollars short to meet expenses (for the main reason, see editorial, *Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 1), thus the long delay in publishing these four newsletters for Vol. 11.

With this fourth Vol. 11 newsletter, it

is renewal time — see separate article in this issue on renewal instructions — and we again encourage all members to add a little something to their dues, or more than a little something if they are able to do so. We won't set the grandiose goal of 350 Sustaining Members this time, but let's at least aim to beat the 306 record.

CRYPTOLETTERS

The Editor welcomes letters from readers on any topic related to cryptozoology, but reserves the right to shorten them or make slight changes to improve clarity or style, but not meaning.

To the Editor:

What are you trying to do? Do you want to be responsible for a rash of mysterious coronary occlusions spanning the globe? *Three* ISC newsletters in a span of three months? You might at least have sent out advance warning notices for those of us with frail dispositions. And now I hear a rumor that a *journal* is in press? Well, please keep up the excellent work.

In a more serious vein, I was very interested in the editorial on Col. Fawcett and his account of a 62-foot (18.9m) anaconda (*Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 2). I am not as inclined to discount his narrative. Granted, anacondas spend considerable time in water, but not *all* the time. Biomechanical stress calculations and herpetological conclusions aside, few scientific observations are ironclad. As the cliché goes, there are exceptions to every rule. And as your own experience has undoubtedly taught you, where living animals are concerned *nothing* is set in concrete.

David Robbins
Rogue River, Oregon, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

I refer to Col. Fawcett's claim of a 62-foot (18.9m) anaconda. As a long-time big game hunter, a ballistics legal expert, and having shot myself in the past a

good number of reptiles, I would like to state the following.

First, in his description of the shooting and killing of the snake, Col. Fawcett stated that it was a one-shot kill with a ".44 soft-nosed bullet." Well, no "soft-nosed" bullet for the weak .44 existed in 1907.

Second, it is very unlikely that one could kill an anaconda, even a 30-footer (9.1m), with a single .44 shot, except by a bullet smack in the brain; and even then it is going to wiggle for a good deal of time, and, if in the water, it will sink.

I would really like to think this account is true, but, alas, I can't!

Marc Pechenart
Paris, France

When quoting Fawcett's account, I edited out some remarks which now seem pertinent: "We stepped ashore and approached the reptile with caution. It was out of action, but shivers ran up and down the body like puffs of wind on a mountain tarn...I tried to cut a piece of the skin, but the beast was by no means dead and the sudden upheavals rather scared us." If no soft-nosed .44 bullets existed in 1907, when were they available? Fawcett presumably entered the incident in his diary in 1907 or soon afterwards — certainly no later than 1925, the year he disappeared. Further opinions from other members, particularly herpetologists and firearms experts, would be welcome. Editor.

To the Editor:

You are so persistent with your recent newsletters that I feel honor-bound to renew my membership, although since my

"retirement" (how does a film-maker ever retire?) there seems to be, more than ever, more than I can fit into a 24-hour day.

For those of us who were unable to attend the Providence meeting, it was very thoughtful of you to let us in on your 10th anniversary cryptozoology panel debate at Brown University (*Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 3). Perhaps the nicest touch was your choice of words to identify some of the audience participants as "unidentified" men — a very apt description for a cryptozoological publication to use. It conjured up wonderful images of Yetis and Sasquatches trying to catch the chairman's eye in order to speak next!

I was particularly interested in John Green's letter, in the same issue, which properly answers those who criticize the plesiosaur theory for Nessie as being inconsistent with the paucity of surface appearances. Helen Bock's letter, also in the same issue, reinforces my view, too, that increased local disturbance is a major factor in forcing any large animal to remain submerged for longer periods of time. One has to add that it is not only pleasure boats that are to blame; the increased use of motorized vessels for Nessie investigations themselves must, to some extent, have been self-defeating in adding targeted — not just random — disturbances.

I still maintain that a surface film or photo would be the most acceptable and straightforward form of evidence, at least for the general public to interpret. But I admit I would be hesitant now to spend as much time as I used to at lochside with my telephoto lenses waiting for something to surface.

Christopher K. Mylne
Linlithgow, West Lothian
Scotland, U.K.

To the Editor:

Thank you for the latest newsletters, particularly the results of the membership survey (*Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 2). I'm sure you have been pressured repeatedly into explaining the long delays in printing the ISC publications. I never want to hear about it again!! Enough has been said. If others want to make the newsletter different, or be printed more on schedule, then let them do the research, the writing, the editing, and foot the bill!

I'm the director of an aviation history conference which presents research papers. I compile the papers into an annual journal of about 100 pages (it is archived at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum). I know what it takes to get a scholarly journal done properly, while at the same time trying to carry on with one's "real" life.

A friend of mine, Henry Holden, is the founder of the DC-3/Dakota Society. He publishes a newsletter which — as with ISC — has fallen behind due to insufficient funding. He has about 400 members, and he wonders how many will have abandoned him while he tries to get back on track.

The ISC survey shows that members will wait for something when they are truly passionate about it, whether its cryptozoology or whatever. I encourage you to devote future newsletter issues to cryptozoology, and not to worry too much about our individual opinions. Mine, by the way, is thumbs up and thanks!

Giacinta Bradley Koontz
The Harriet Quimby Research Conference
Woodland Hills, California, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

The story of the Bermuda Blob and the Pacific globsters (*Newsletter*, Vol 7, No. 3,) intrigues me because they are similar to "monsters" washed up on Western Australian shores.

The Rottnest Monster of September, 1934, was such, and the first which I investigated. Rottnest is an island some 15 miles (24km) offshore at Fremantle. When I got to the locality, the carcass was some 90 feet (27m) out to sea. I stripped off, and swam out to it. As I approached, I saw that it was moving, and as I was wearing goggles I dived under it — to find, to my horror, two gigantic sharks. A couple of seconds later, I ploughed a deep furrow up the beach! The carcass later washed ashore, and I found it to be a big piece of blubber — with sinuous tissue which looked like hair — completely devoid of any organs.

I have seen similar blubber masses along our coast in subsequent years — even whole whale carcasses with harpoon remnants — with the same hair-like fibrous tissue. In 1965, I investigated another monster or "globster" with Geoff Shaw, a colleague at the Western Australian Museum. The carcass was a great mass of blubber, complete with fibrous hair-like tissue, and completely devoid of any organs.

During the period 1966-67, I went with my daughter to investigate the beaching of some 32 false killer whales near Albany. On a nearby sloping beach was a fresh slab of blubber about which there was no doubt of its origin. It was part of a slaughtered humpback whale which had

been lost from a ship operating off the southern coast of Western Australia. The only way it differed from the "hairy monsters" was that it was freshly sliced — just skin and blubber.

I believe that all these blobs, globsters, and organic masses with fibrous "hairs" are the tragic remains of slaughtered whales.

Athol M. Douglas
Augusta, Western Australia, Australia

Mr. Douglas is an Honorary Member of the Society.

To the Editor:

I read with interest your editorial "The *Danta* and the Horse-Bear" (*Newsletter*, Vol. 10, No. 4.), particularly your comments on the name *danta* being a native term for the tapirs of Central and South America.

In 1965, I spent 6 months in the forests of the mountainous northern part of Chiapas, Mexico. My field assistants, who were local people, described a large animal that they called *danta*. I never saw one, but the locals reported having seen them frequently in the (then) recent past, and also reported having hunted and shot them for food. They described them as large, and they said that they often crashed through the forest with great commotion. Several people in the area told me that what was locally called *danta* was indeed a tapir.

John M. Proffett
Proffett Exploration, Inc.
Eagle River, Alaska, U.S.A.

The ISC Newsletter is not issued for permanent scientific record, and thus, for the purposes of zoological nomenclature, does not fulfill the criteria for publication as defined in the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature.

Archival Material: Members are encouraged to send copies of cryptozoology-related newspaper reports, popular magazine articles, and scientific papers to the ISC Secretariat. Recently published material is particularly welcome, but old and obscure items are also of interest and potential importance. It is better for the Secretariat to have several copies of an article rather than none at all, so when in doubt, send. All submissions should clearly indicate a full reference; e.g., name of publication, date, and — in the case of scientific papers — volume and page numbers. In most cases, because of the volume of mail, members will not receive an acknowledgment of receipt, but all items submitted are carefully read, are often used in the *Newsletter*, and are preserved for posterity.

Society Purpose and Policy: The International Society of Cryptozoology was founded in 1982 in Washington, D.C., and is incorporated and operates under the laws of the District of Columbia. It is also recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt, non-profit scientific organization. The Society serves as a focal point for the investigation, analysis, publication, and discussion of all matters related to animals of unexpected form or size, or unexpected occurrence in time or space. The Society also serves as a forum for public discussion and education, and for providing reliable information to appropriate authorities. The Society takes no position on which of these supposed animals may actually exist. Opinions may be expressed by individual members, but they are personal ones, and do not reflect any official or unofficial Society policy. Likewise, the Society takes no position concerning the authenticity of any given cryptozoological evidence or events.

Memberships and Subscriptions: Membership and subscription inquiries should be addressed to the ISC Secretariat, P.O. Box 43070, Tucson, Arizona 85733, U.S.A. Membership is US\$32 or £22 a year. Payment may be made by personal check if drawn against a U.S. or U.K. bank. Persons donating any additional amount become Sustaining Members. Membership includes the receipt of *The ISC Newsletter* quarterly and the journal *Cryptozoology* annually. Couples may take out a joint membership for US\$37 or £25 (only one set of publications is sent). Institutions such as corporations, zoological parks and aquariums, and libraries may obtain institutional subscriptions to the Society's publications for US\$45 a year. There are no additional fees for memberships or institutional subscriptions outside of the U.S.A. Although payment by non-U.S./U.K. members is preferred in US\$ (by bank draft drawn against a U.S. bank, or by international postal money order), individuals in the following countries may also pay by personal check in their own currencies provided the equivalent of US\$32 (using the exchange rate current at the time) is sent: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. The above payment methods apply also to membership renewals. All payments should be sent to the ISC Secretariat at the above address.

Back Issues: All back issues of both *The ISC Newsletter* and the journal *Cryptozoology* are available to individuals for US\$3.50 or £2.50 and US\$18 or £12 respectively (institutions should contact the ISC Secretariat for institutional rates). These prices all include postage costs. Orders between \$33 and \$100 (or £23-69) receive a 10% discount; orders between US \$101 and \$200 (£70-138) receive a 20% discount; and orders of \$201 (£139) or more receive a 30% discount. Free order forms listing all back publications may be requested from the ISC Secretariat. All orders must be prepaid, and the above payment methods apply.

Field Medical Advisor: Michael J. Manyak, M.D., Department of Urology, George Washington University Medical Center, 2150 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, U.S.A. Tel: 202/994-4002; Fax: 202/994-3671. Members planning fieldwork, particularly in tropical areas, are encouraged to contact Dr. Manyak for free medical/health care advice.

Honorary Members: Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (South Africa); Athol M. Douglas (Australia); Robert L. Downing (U.S.A.); Richard S.R. Fitter (U.K.); John Green (Canada); The Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (U.K.); Marie-Jeanne Koffmann (Russia); Theodore Monod (France); Robert H. Rines (U.S.A.); Bob Titmus (Canada).

Benefactors: Rolf Auster (U.S.A.); Elizabeth G. Bosworth (U.S.A.); G. A. Buder, III (U.S.A.); Loren Coleman (U.S.A.); Robert C. Dorion (Guatemala); Edward L. Krause (U.S.A.); Michael T. Martin (U.S.A.); Gale J. Raymond (U.S.A.); Hugh H. Trotti, Jr. (U.S.A.); Dick Venema (The Netherlands); Kurt Von Nieda (U.S.A.); William Weiler (U.S.A.); Edward B. Winn (Canada); Bette Wolfskill (U.S.A.); Count F. C. Zedlitz (Argentina).

Corporate Sponsors: Academy of Applied Science (U.S.A.); The Conservation Agency (U.S.A.); Tracto-Technik Group of Companies (Germany/U.K./France/U.S.A.).



The ISC Newsletter

International Society of Cryptozoology
P. O. Box 43070
Tucson, Arizona 85733, U.S.A.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TUCSON, AZ
PERMIT NO. 792